

Malnutrition

INADEQUATE FOOD INTAKE

Malnutrition is a major health issue in the world. Malnutrition is when someone is not eating enough or is **underfeeding**.

In Western societies, malnutrition is often linked to **overeating**, which accumulates health risks. Yet you can also find incidents of undernourishment, for example in the elderly.

Extreme diets excluding several food groups can lead to nutritional deficiencies. This is what is known as an **imbalanced diet**. If a food group is missing from or not sufficiently present in our diet, we also talk about malnutrition.

DEFICIENCIES

Iron is one of the most readily available elements in the world, but it is the one most often missing from people's diets. Two billion people suffer from a lack of iron.



Meat and fish are two good sources of iron. Vegetables sometimes contain good quantities of iron but it is less easy to absorb. Absorption of iron can be improved by eating food rich in vitamin C at the same time. A lack of iron can be caused by intestinal parasites, loss of blood or higher requirements during growth. If diet is not sufficient alone, you can also make up for this lack of iron with dietary supplements.

Malnutrition due to **undernourishment** is a major problem in some parts of the world, where most of the population suffers from various severe deficiencies. This state often damages physical and cerebral development in children and, in some cases, contributes to premature deaths in babies and infants.

Malnutrition

Malnutrition means that a diet is...

- adequate
- inadequate
- copious

Which of these words is not linked to malnutrition?

- Overeating
- Undernourishment
- Balanced

Undernourishment means...

- not eating enough
- eating too much
- eating normally

Undernourishment is most frequent in...

- Africa
- Europe
- North America

Undernourishment in babies and children does not cause...

- delayed physical and cerebral development
- mortality
- toothache

Which population is likely to suffer from malnutrition in industrialised countries?

- Children
- Adults
- The elderly

Diets which exclude certain food groups can result in malnutrition.

- False
- True

Answers

Malnutrition means that a diet is...

adequate

Wrong! Try again!

inadequate

Well done! Malnutrition is the consequence of an inadequate diet, made up of too much or not enough food, or characterised by the lack of one or several nutrients.

copious

Wrong! Excessive nutrition plays a role, but it is not the only cause.

Which of these words is not linked to malnutrition?

Overeating

Wrong! Overeating means eating too much in relation to daily requirements. This is a factor of malnutrition.

Undernourishment

Wrong! Undernourishment means that food intake is not enough to meet daily requirements. This is a factor of malnutrition.

Balanced

Well done! A balanced diet is a diet which covers all daily requirements and contains the right proportions of food from each food group.

Undernourishment means...

not eating enough

Well done! It means that food intake is not enough to cover the body's requirements.

eating too much

Wrong! This would be overeating.

eating normally

Wrong! Try again!

Undernourishment is most frequent in...

Africa

Well done! In some African countries, the supply of food is not always adequate, so the risk of malnutrition is high.

Europe

Wrong! In Europe, there is a higher risk of overeating.

North America

Wrong! In North America, there is a higher risk of overeating.

Undernourishment in babies and children does not cause...

delayed physical and cerebral development

Wrong! Undernourishment can lead to delayed physical and cerebral development.

mortality

Wrong! Extreme undernourishment can cause death.

toothache

Well done! That's right, toothache is not a result of undernourishment.

Which population is likely to suffer from malnutrition in industrialised countries?

Children

Wrong! This is not the population most at risk.

Adults

Wrong! This is not the population most at risk.

The elderly

Well done! When elderly people lose their appetite or have difficulties chewing, they may then suffer from malnutrition.

Diets which exclude certain food groups can result in malnutrition.

False

Wrong! To avoid nutrient deficiency, it is best to eat food from each food group.

True

Well done! That's right! Excluding food groups can lead to a serious risk of deficiency in the nutrients in those groups.
